

M E R C A T O R :

O R,

Commerce Retrieved.

From Tuesday, June 29. to Thursday, July 1. 1714.

*Our Opposers speak evil of what they understand not.**The Jamaica Men in the right, to say they shall be brought to a low Ebb if they are stop't from Thieving and Plundering.**The greatest part of their Business has been always, (1.) Buccaneersing, cutting down the Spaniard's Woods, Robbing, Ravaging, Burning Cities, and Murthering People; and (2.) Clandestine Trade.**This Trade Dishonourable and Reproachful to England.**They may depend on it, that the Spaniards will take better care of them for the future.**This Trade not so much our Advantage in Trade, as it is to be carry'd on by Old Spain.**If we had seiz'd part of America in the late War as we might have done, the Case had been alter'd.**An Account who hindred.**The same Persons who prevented that and our former attacking Dunkirk, are the Opposers of our Treaty of Commerce with France.**Their Reasons also are the same, viz. for fear lest Britain should grow too Rich and too Great.**We may live to remember it to them hereafter.*

IT is no great wonder to hear our Preferers of Commerce talk of the cruel Treatment the Jamaica Merchants receive from the Spaniards, in not permitting their private Piratical Trade thither; seeing from the beginning it has been their way to *speak Evil of the Things they understand not.*

The best Jest is to hear the Men of Jamaica, or these Mountebanks for them talk how low an Ebb they should be brought to, if Her Majesty does not grant them Reprisals upon the Spaniards, which in plain English is *as much as to say*, that if their thieving, plundering and clandestine Trade is taken from them, all the rest of their Trade will in comparison of it be of small Value.

The Trade of Jamaica is known to be principally depending upon their Robbing the Spaniards: On one hand their Logwood and Nicoraga-wood. Cutting! what is it but cutting down their Neighbour's Woods in the Gulph of Honduras, and Bay of Campeachy? Their *Buccaneering* is a general Tragedy, and a Trade which they have driven, at the Expence of a great deal of their own Blood, and innumerable Murders, Barbarities, Burnings and Plunderings upon the Innocent Inhabitants of New Spain, at the same time that we have been in a profound Peace with the Nation of Spaniards, and under solemn Engagements, publick Faith, &c. not to Trade thither, Things we cannot mention without Horror.

Might not the Spaniards charge us with our *Bona-fide*, as much to the purpose as we do to the French King, and much more too on these Accounts? Might not they shew us the sack'd and ruin'd Cities, ravish'd and ruin'd Families, ravag'd and plunder'd Villages, which have

been the Effects of the Pyracies and Depredations of a Nation, who at the same time were in the most profound Peace with them?

It will be answer'd, that these Things were not done by the English Government, but by the Buccaneers or Robbers of the West-Indies, whom the English Government have frequently punish'd, and always disown'd, which was as much Satisfaction as the Spaniards could desire of us, and clears our publick Faith of all Reproaches of that kind.

It is true, this is a good Answer as to the English Government; but the Mercator must say, it is no Answer, for the Jamaica Merchants and Inhabitants who are part of the English Nation; for it is well known, the Buccaneers were always publick at Jamaica, every Body knew them, and their Designs; their Vessels were fitted out there, and came in thither at their Return with their Booty openly and publickly.

We all knew Jamaica was the Receiver, tho' these were the Thieves, and the Jamaica-Merchants as well knew the Buccaneers when they set out by their Equipment, as they did when they came home by their Booty.

The Cargoes of Silver these Men have brought home from the South-Seas, and from their Enterprizes on the Spanish Coasts; have they not been spent in all manner of Riot and Debaucheries AT Jamaica? And has it not been by these Things and their private clandestine Trade with Spain that these Men have been made Rich and Great?

Well may they say, they shall be reduced to a low Ebb if these Trades are stop'd, unless Her Majesty will give them leave to go and rob Her Allies to support their Pride, which they



they may depend upon it will not be granted them.

Also they may be assured, *which is indeed their great Grievance*, that the Spaniards will take new and better Measures than ever yet they took, as well to prevent the Depredations of the Buccaneers of Jamaica, and other Parts in America, as also the private Trading on the Coast by the Sloops of Jamaica, &c. So that they must expect NOW, if they go out upon that way of Trading, they will be snapt up by the Spaniards as certainly as they were wholly neglected before; If this will bring them to a LOW EBB, as perhaps it may, all the *fair Merchants* of England Trading to Spain in the Old Channel, in which that Trade by Treaty ought to run, will fare the better for it, and rejoyce in it; and this is what the *Mercator* meant by saying, that it is better for England that the Trade should run in its old Channel from England by Cadiz to America than by Jamaica, for this Thieving Trade is but an Impoverishing anticipating Trade, and tends to ruining the general Commerce; as Hawking and Pedling are found ruinous to Trade by cutting off the Circulation, and depriving many Families, which would otherwise be employed in those Trades, of their Business and Livelihood.

All Trade is Improved by proper and regular Methods; the supplying the Spaniards with English Goods by private and Clandestine landing the same, by which the King of Spain is defrauded of his Duties, and the Goods thereby underfold, is ruinous to our general Commerce, by reducing the English Merchants Goods from Old Spain to be underfold, and abate in Price, and, in effect, will bring down the Value of our Goods in Spain, and so lessen our Gain on that side six times as much as it may be supposed to advance it on the other.

On this Account it is, that the *Mercator* insists upon it, that it is more our Advantage in England that the Trade from Europe to New Spain should be carried on wholly, as it ever was, by the way of Old Spain, and thro' the Hands of the Spaniards, than as we have for some Years done by it, by the Medium of Thieves and Robbers, for these Jamaica Men are no better.

It is true, that if, as by the Contract with the Emperor, that was then the Emperor, and that is now, we might have done, we had by fair War taken Possession of some considerable Place in Spanish America, which being so possessed, was by that said Treaty to have been our own. If this had been done, the Case had been altered, for then the Staple of our Goods had been removed, and we might perhaps have obtain'd by a Peace a free and lawful Liberty

of Trade from thence to the other parts of the Continent of Spain, tho' it must be owned, that the Spaniards would have been in the end ruin'd by it.

But as this is not done, the Suggestion is nothing to the purpose, only this the *Mercator* cannot refrain observing, (*viz.*) That we ought to know why such Settlement in America was not obtained for the English, who had nothing to hinder them from doing it, nor any Argument from home that could be used against it.

But this will fall so heavy upon our good Allies the Dutch, that the *Mercator* is unwilling to enter upon a Truth which may some time or other give us Cause to remember their usage of us, to their Disadvantage. It is known, that the same People who so often prevented both King *William*, and all the English Generals after him, from besieging Dunkirk, were the Persons, and the only Persons, who prevented us making any Attempts upon the Spanish West-Indies, and for the same Reasons, (*viz.*) In general, Jealousie of making us too Rich, too Great, and too Powerful in Trade.

The *Mercator* cannot dismiss this Head, being near the Close of this Work, without a Remark, which is well worth every true Brittain's Understanding, (*viz.*) That the very same Persons, State or People, who, as above, prevented our attacking Dunkirk, for fear it should be put in our possession, attempting New Spain, for fear we should get a footing there, and encrease thereby our Naval Strength, our Wealth and our Trade, are the same Persons and People who have Opposed our Treaty of Commerce with France, and for the same Reasons also, (*viz.*) For fear we should grow too Rich by it.

Indeed, the Dutch have shewn their Master-piece of Policy in this part, (*viz.*) That finding a Party here among us ready to lay hold of any Advantage to make a popular Clamour against the Ministry, they fell in with that Party, put the Words into their Mouths, and found them Fools enough to believe it, or Knaves enough to cry out whether they believed it or no, that the French Trade was to our Loss and Disadvantage; and so brought these Men, by Party-Feuds, to rob their Country of real Advantages in Trade in favour of the Dutch, who are the greatest Rivals of our Commerce that are in the World.

But the *Mercator* returns to our Trade in New Spain, which he says is now carried on in an unnatural, dishonourable and disadvantageous manner, as will hereafter farther appear.



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